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CODIB-D-111/1.2/2
25 November 1964

UNITED STATES INTELLIGENCE BOARD

COMMITTEE ON DOCUMENTATION

Item Identification - Task Team II

Approved Terms of Reference

The attached CODIB-approved paper, including task team name
change from "Bibliographics" to "Item Identification", reflects action
at the last meeting on the draft CODIB-D-111/1.2/1 of 4 November 1964,
as described in CODIB-M-58, 23 November 1964, para. 6.

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Secretary

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GROUP I
Excluded from automatic
downgrading and
declassification

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Statement of Task

1. Scope

The idea for this team was formed by combining two of the groups suggested in the CODIB report to USIB on the SCIPS Report (CODIB-D-82/28, 26 February 1964, page 21. The CODIB report envisaged one group to "develop and publish a standard item list" and another to "develop and implement standard item description lists." These two tasks are distinctly different, although they use some common elements of information. By the same token some of these elements are common also to other task teams: content control, foreign publications, and also installations description. The differences between the two parts of the "bibliographics" task team are in many respects as great or greater than the differences between that task team and others. Thus the "item list" is an inventory and standard identification of publications of all kinds of use in intelligence work. The emphasis is on identification, being able (on a continuing basis) to call a given series by the same name or number in all processing organizations using that item. The purpose of work on item description lists, on the other hand, is to standardize header elements (those describing the document as opposed to its contents). Both concepts are closely related, of course, since both have to do with identification of items rather than content, and both speak to the problem of cross-system correlation. However, the product of each effort would be different: in the case of an item list, this would be an updated identification list available to all which would facilitate cross-system communication about the existence and processing of the same documents in different systems. Such a list would need to be a constantly updated

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tool requiring a standardizing authority and a control publishing point. Standardizing item description lists, on the other hand, would not result in such a list (although if all systems standardized their header data, they would of course be better able to produce input to such a list and thus require less centralized resolution to produce the list). Instead, the immediate product would be standards for header information which might or might not be accepted in all component systems of the community.

Logically, it might seem best to standardize all document description elements for the entire community, and then devise a system for reporting certain of these elements to a central point for maintenance of an inventory or item list. This would, in the present circumstances, be impractical, especially if we were forced to wait for general acceptance and use of such a standard for document description before producing an item list. Further, the gains from an item list can be realized by concentrating on only a very small number of document description elements, which could be more easily standardized, at least for an inventory, than the total list of elements. For instance, perhaps all that is needed to begin a fruitful cross-talk between systems is an inventory containing category, series title, originator, classification and some kind of unique item number. Since most if not all local systems already control title, originator and classification (although title and originator vary so much that at present it is extremely difficult to cross-correlate between systems), all that would be necessary is the provision of a unique number which would tie together items called by different names in different systems and/or different levels of source or originators.

It is therefore apparent that the "Item list" might precede the final acceptance of standardized complete document description elements by many of the community IP systems. Further, introduction of such an item list into the community would, if an update system were devised, enable the kind of cross-talk which would in turn facilitate acceptance of further standards on other descriptive elements.

It is proposed, therefore, that this task team, now charged with both jobs, tackle them one at a time, starting with the "item list." The following task statement, therefore, will deal with the "item list", and within that task, only with the first phase of the work. On this latter point, it should be pointed out that the CODIB report on SCIPS (cited above) defines the task as follows: "develop and publish a standard item list." It is felt that the first task is to define the scope and develop a plan for such an item list. This task can be accomplished by ad hoc task team methods plus tasking the departments and agencies with some fact-gathering homework. The actual preparation and updating of the item list itself, however, may require some mechanism with a greater measure of continuity and centralized direction, and possibly EDP support.

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The following task statement, therefore, refers only to the "item list" and within that, only to the first, or planning phase:

II. Item Control Task Statement (First Phase)

A. Objective

To develop a plan whereby an inventory and standard identification of publications, document series, and other processing items of substantive intelligence can be developed and maintained.

B. Initial Problem Parameters

1. Scope

    a. Items containing or directly concerned with information on foreign areas.

    b. All subjects and areas

    c. All sources and classification

    d. All forms and degrees of processing.

2. Characteristics

    a. Dynamic reporting and update system

    b. Both periodic reference lists and ad hoc query response

    c. May maintain samples

3. Constraints

    a. The system must service entire Intelligence Community

    b. Must consider local item control objectives

    c. The system, itself, is not intended to provide content control or document retrieval

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Initial Tasks

1. Review and summarize significant present and planned item identification systems and activities of USIB member agencies

2. Identify common elements of item identification systems.

3. Establish categories of items useful for community identification systems.

4. Obtain rough estimate of volumes by major categories.

5. Identify control points in the community where item control is or should be established.

6. Determine the scope of the item list, establish priorities and phases for implementation.

7. Develop gross alternative plans for an item register.

8. Determine additional tasks required to accomplish objectives of Part I (Item List) and Part II (standardization of elements).

9. Make initial report including recommendations to CODIB.

D. Resources Required

This task involves the following types of work: team discussion of goals, plans, etc.; planning and scheduling of homework tasks; departmental homework; analysis of results of that homework; resolution of differences and preparation of alternative plans for implementation. Four types of resources will be used: the Task Team as a group, the individual team members, the CODIB Support Staff, and CODIB members. Their general tasks will be as follows:

1. Task Team as a group: setting goals, determining schedules and deadlines, discussion and resolution of problems identified by staff work, monitoring all work connected with the initial tasks (#1-8 above).

2. Individual team members: obtaining the information required from departmental components.

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3. CODIB Support Staff: work at various times with the SCIPS data base; identifying common elements of the item identification system after departmental homework is done (task 2); identify alternative categories of items useful for community identification systems (task 3) for decision by the group; helping individual members to obtain gross volume figures (task 4) and pulling these figures together; use of the SCIPS data base and members' information to identify alternative control points for item control for decision and resolution by the group (task 5); preliminary staff work to identify and present gross alternative plans for an item register for consideration by the group (task 7); staff work in initial drafting of additional tasks required to accomplish objectives, again for group decision (task 8).

4. CODIB members: assist in obtaining additional, necessary departmental support for task team efforts.

Since departmental homework is required as well as group work, it is felt that the job can best be done by the Task Team with the assistance of the full time members of the CODIB Support Staff in the work outlined above. This is particularly important since the overall task of this phase of the team's mission is to prepare gross alternative plans for an _operational system_. This would be very difficult to accomplish without some full-time assistance and continuity. However, planning and direction will be in the hands of the Task Team, whose members will in addition assist in arranging for the departmental homework.

Members of the Task Team will require clearances above Secret, and members should be assigned from or have ready access to and knowledge of the publications control focal points in each department: CIA, DIA, State, NSA, Army, Navy, Air Force and NPIC. With the active support of the CODIB Support Staff, members of the Task Team will spend about one day a week equivalent in addition to arranging for obtaining departmental homework.